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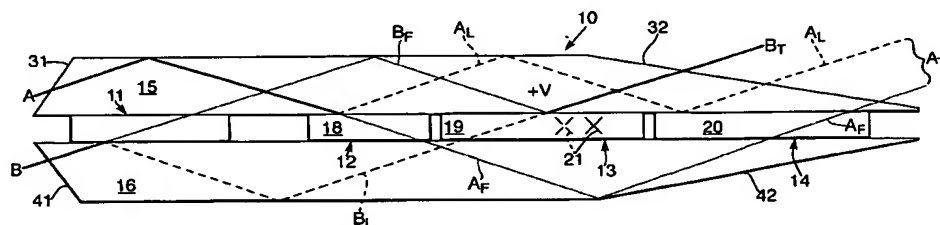
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(54) Title: SWITCHABLE COUPLING



(57) Abstract: A switchable coupler (10) has a first waveguide (15) defining an inlet port (31) for a first unpolarised light input (A) and a first outlet port (32), and also a second waveguide (16) defining an inlet port (41) for a second unpolarised light input (13) and a second outlet port (42). Polarisation splitter devices (11, 12) and two electro-optical switches (13, 14) are sandwiched between the waveguides (15, 16). The polarisation splitter devices (11, 12) are positioned to split the light inputs (A and B) into respective refracted and reflected polarised components ( $A_L$  and  $A_F$ ;  $B_L$  and  $B_F$ ), and the electro-optical switch (13) is operable by the application across it of a potential difference (+V) to recombine the polarised components ( $B_L$ ,  $B_F$ ) and to couple them with the light output  $A_T$  through the first outlet port (32). As shown in Figure (7), the electro-optical switch (14) is alternatively operable by the application across it of the potential difference (+V) to recombine the polarised components ( $A_L$ ,  $A_F$ ) and to couple them with the light output  $B_T$  through the second outlet port (42).